

MINUTES OF THE CIVIC COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2015

PRESENT

The Mayor – Councillor Baddeley
The Deputy Mayor – Councillor Salt
Councillor Davies
Councillor Hall
Councillor Hart
Councillor Jones
Councillor Lawson
Councillor Rogers
Councillor Rushton
Councillor Sheldon
Councillor Swift

Also in attendance
Councillor Harper
Councillor Hawley

38.15. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:
Councillor Jackson
Councillor Redfern

The Town Crier

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- a Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations: none were declared.
- b Other Interests: Councillor Sheldon in any item relating to Biddulph in Bloom, as Chair.

40. MINUTES

- a It was **RESOLVED** to sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Civic Committee held on 13 October 2015.
- b It was **RESOLVED** to receive a verbal report of the Tourism sub-committee meeting held on 10 November 2015.

Councillor Rogers reported on town guide. He was asking input of all members. Please fill in the sheet which will be circulated with next agendas. He also spoke of the idea to create a Biddulph in Bloom/Garden Town promotional leaflet, kindly supported by County Councillor Ian Lawson.

Councillor Hart stated that we need more accommodation providers in our town. This year, Biddulph Grange was part of the Visit Staffordshire package, where people needed to stay locally.

The Chair commented that there were certain times of the year when the town looked at its best – a good idea to highlight these times. Councillor Sheldon said the original idea was to plant for the seasons. This planting was now coming to maturity and gave a series of flowering trees and spring flowers. The group aimed to keep the town clean and tidy at all times.

41. EVENTS DIRECTOR CONTRACT

An update was given from the last meeting. Members were in favour of one year extension.

42. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- a) Fingerposts – it was suggested to site a one multi-arm post outside the Town Hall, to be sited near to the noticeboard. Councillor Jones and Councillor Hawley to take this item to Biddulph Moor Community Association. Further posts to be sited at Wharf Rd car park and by Library Street. A specific proposal to be brought to the next Civic Committee.
- b) Town Deal – the Chair read out a statement which said that reports will be made to Town Council every six months, with quarterly meetings. Councillor Davies was concerned that the Town Council and people of Biddulph should be central to the Biddulph Town Deal.

We have ongoing items:

- 1) A one way system in South View
- 2) The railings/kissing gates project
- 3) Uplighting the town hall
- 4) Springfield Road Allotments – ongoing
- 5) The War Memorial – we have carried out a review and decided to leave this alone

We needed to decide what our vision was. Councillor Jones added that the County Council was now saying that it was its initiative, but it didn't come from County in the first place.

The Chair asked Councillor Salt to discuss her idea. She said that she knew there was a sum of money just for the area opposite Methodist Church from the Sainsbury's build. Councillor Salt showed an idea of fountains on the green area to encourage children into the town and to further landscape the area. There was a need to have the roadway removed. The Chair said that we would make a note of this and include other ideas members may have. Councillor Jones supported the fountain idea, but felt that trees and water features didn't necessarily go together. The Chair said we were looking for all ideas.

Councillor Hart said that he had recently contacted the District Council, which resulted in an email being sent out from the County Council, appearing to want to run the Town Deal. Meetings had now taken place at the District Council and we should be getting more information in the near future. However, the majority of effort was coming from this Council at the present.

Councillor Sheldon added that all three authorities had to work together. We need a Plan of Action and need to start work in removing the piece of road at Station Road. The piece of land was dissected by the road and we needed some advice.

Councillor Harper suggested uplighting the War Memorial and also setting lights into the Town Hall steps whilst the frontage work was going on. He also felt the Town Hall should have another flagpole and that we could illuminate the Miners Wheel.

Councillor Hart said that as there were some consequences for the Artisan Market if South View changes went ahead, the grass area could be exploited more. It was currently under-used.

Councillor Swift expressed concern about the busy road area in Station Road – how could traffic turn around?

Councillor Hall said that we were just trying to get some ideas and aspirations and that it was not for us at present to solve all of the problems. Councillor Lawson asked about Sainsbury's front shops and the Chief Officer gave an update she had received from the manager –there were no plans for the foreseeable future.

Councillor Salt said that she would like to see access to the Town Hall garden from the street. Councillor Hawley agreed, saying that the town Hall frontage should be turned into a Town Square –a focus for the town centre.

Councillor Jones said that he would like to go further and to see pedestrianisation of the High Street , which he saw more as a social space rather than retail. He offered to lead the fight with the bus companies, saying that it is chaos when buses stop outside the Chemist on the High Street, opposite parked cars.

The Chair brought all the suggestions together:

- 1 **Fountains at Station Road**; the land was subject to a grant which needed to be used before it expired. Also, investigation of the defunct road. It was Moved to take this project on. Councillor Lawson would speak to County Councillor Deaville on this.
- 2 **Uplights** to War Memorial, lime trees and steps. All were in favour of taking this on. (Councillor Sheldon sad that we didn't use Biddulph Valley Park for events. Most towns use their parks).
- 3 **Flagpole** – could use on to welcome visitors and celebrate events, such as Commonwealth Day.
- 4 Councillor Sheldon suggested that there were **coats of arms** attached to towns; we could use Biddulph's and have standards to fly.
- 5 **Town Hall garden**; there would have be a good sized area if it included the lawn and area at the bottom of the steps and side garden. Councillor Salt said that she would prefer to keep the grass; there was not much in the town. The Chair added that we may have problem with the District Council about taking grass away. Councillor Sheldon said that anti-social activities do take place on the frontage and that there are maintenance issues. Councillor Harper suggested tree planting in the High Street and Councillor

Sheldon added cameras always put forwards as obstacle. Would like to see trees. Moving the idea into a practical consideration is the difficult problem.

Chair thanked members; we now have a whole list of fledgling ideas for the Town Deal.

- c) Councillor Rogers asked if we could send a letter of appreciation to the Royal British Legion, particularly for getting the band together. This was Moved.
- d) A letter from John Robinson had been tabled, with suggestions made for the next Remembrance Sunday – it was Moved to bring this forwards next October.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed Date